**Was there a particular way of knowing that was most important in the decision about whether Data was the property of the Starfleet? If so or if not, tell us why and how.**

Data, an android who is also a lieutenant commander of the Starfleet organisation in space, is put on trial as there’s a discussion on whether he is property of Starfleet or not. In the Star Trek episode ‘measure of a man’ there are many ways of knowing that are portrayed in judging/determining whether Data is star fleet property or not. This essay will discuss which particular way of knowing- sense perception, reason and emotion was the most important of all in deciding whether Data was property of Star Fleet or not.

One of the ways on knowing used was sense perception. Since Data was on trial on whether he was property of star fleet or not, Captain Picard was against the notion that Data was property of star fleet, but rather a sentient being having a choice to either resign from Starfleet or refuse to cooperate with Maddox (who wanted to disassemble/ deactivate Data for experimental purposes on androids). Commander Riker represented Maddox’s interests. To show that Data was a property, Riker brought heavy steel for Data to bend and he effortlessly bent it, something which any normal human wouldn’t do. This extraordinary power ‘showed’ the judge evidence that data was property through sense perception. Since she saw with her eyes.

Another way of knowing which was shown was reason. This is mostly shown by Captain Picard in defending Data during the trial, Picard used reasoning in the following ways in determining that Data is a sentient being not a property; as Maddox’s definition of a sentient life had to meet certain criteria, Picard shows him that Data is meeting two of the three criteria namely, Data is intelligent and self-aware but as for a conscience- they all failed to answer his question “how do we measure consciousness.” Data’s self-awareness was proven when he was asked what he was doing in the court room, he answered that they were in court discussing whether Data is a property of Star fleet or not and argue for his right to self-determination. His intelligence was proven as his brain could process many things at once as he has a storage capacity of 800 quadrillion bits, which is more than as intelligence as an average human. This puzzled Riker and Maddox as their points against Data were overcome by Picards strong and effective arguments against Rikers procedures.

The last way of knowing that I saw was important was emotion. Emotion made the atmosphere in the court seem more tense than ever as this was Picard’s final argument closing his section. Picard started to question Data on why he kept some personal items that he thought were dear to him, he was asked why he still keeps a diary which was given to him by Capt Picard. Data answered by saying he did not know exactly why he kept it although he mostly kept it because Picard was his friend , which shows a friendship that built up in Data emotionally just like any other human. Then Picard requests for Data to show them a picture type hologram that Dta is still keeping of a dead female officer, after asked why he keeps it he answers that they had a “thing’” possibly meaning a close relationship or bonding and its hard to et go of her that why he still keeps her picture. All this touched the heart of the judge, as it would not be right for a human like phenomenon like data to be disassembled and experimented on if he has feelings of his own and had human like features. It would be a crime/murder to shut him down and disassemble him completely. Picard’s victory was also seen as after the trial ended and the judge had ruled that data is a sentient being, on his way out Maddox appealed to Data as ‘he’ not ‘It’ showing that he has officially seen Data as a sentient being rather than an android only and is no longer dehumanizing him.

In conclusion, I think emotion played a huge role in deciding whether Data was a property of Star Fleet or not. This is because, Data’s emotional attachments to several of the things he kept showed the judge just how he can feel about certain things, making him human like in his actions. The fact that the jury went silent after Picard’s account which touched every one emotionally and felt sympathetic towards Data, shows how they all changed their minds and agreed to Picard since there was no one else opposing his point. Therefore, emotion played an important role showing the humans that androids can also hurt and feel just like humans so they shouldn’t be treated any different.